

**National Institute of Nursing Research and
National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities**

**Establishing Partnerships to Address Health Disparities and the
Career Development of Minority Nurse Researchers**

**Hyatt Regency Hotel, Bethesda, Maryland
February 5-6, 2001**

Day One: February 5, 2001

**Overview : Ms. Kay Johnson Graham, Minority Outreach Coordinator, National
Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)**

Ms. Graham provided an overview of the meeting and discussed the mission of this gathering: to create partnerships to address health disparities research and to assist in developing the careers of minority nurses. She previewed the morning session, which was scheduled to include several welcome addresses and presentations about the importance of partnerships, highlighting some examples of how majority and minority institutions have partnered.

Introduction: Dr. Patricia A. Grady, Director, NINR

Dr. Grady welcomed participants and asked them to focus on three main goals: to develop partnerships that will lead to reducing health disparities; to develop the cadre of nurse researchers, increasing the overall number of minority nurse researchers; and to train others who are not minorities to participate and carry out research in minority communities.

The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) has a long history of supporting research on minority health topics and currently supports a portfolio that is growing substantially. The National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) is the National Institutes of Health (NIH) focal point for research to eliminate health disparities.

Welcome: Dr. Ruth L. Kirschstein, Acting Director, National Institutes of Health

Dr. Kirschstein welcomed participants and emphasized that the scientific efforts discussed at this meeting should be translated, as quickly as possible, into the benefits of quality of life and good health for everyone. The overall goal of the NCMHD is to decrease and eventually eliminate health disparities, and she noted that the draft Trans-NIH Strategic Research Plan to Reduce and Ultimately Eliminate Health Disparities is available on the NCMHD Web site. It will be increasingly critical for researchers from within the populations that have suffered because of health disparities to enter research careers, including nursing, in order to work directly on eliminating those disparities.

Conference Purpose and Expected Outcomes: Dr. Patricia A. Grady

Dr. Grady noted that the institutions represented at this meeting cover wide geographic and scientific areas and the focus of this meeting is to build partnerships and collaborations among those diverse institutions. Participants would be hearing about pilot programs and other successes throughout the day, learning more from each other about best practices, strategies for implementation, and how to capitalize on one another's strengths.

The long-term goals of the NINR are to support nursing research to help reduce and eventually eliminate health disparities and to build the Nation's nursing research capacity to facilitate this. Nurse researchers are well situated to provide guidance about and implement solutions for reaching these goals, and the NINR and the NCMHD have a long and successful track record in partnering to reach these goals.

Eliminating Health Disparities Among Racial, Ethnic, and Medically Underserved Populations: Dr. John Ruffin, Director, National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities

Dr. Ruffin noted that, to make a significant reduction in health disparities, the diversity represented at this meeting would need to be replicated throughout the country. Everyone must participate in working to eliminate health disparities between minorities and majorities, and minority institutions and majority institutions. Also, 2-year institutions, no longer merely training grounds for 4-year institutions, must also be included in the charge.

Twenty-five years ago, many of the institutions that are now considered premier research institutions were in the same developmental stage as institutions such as Howard University and Hampton University. Federal support to those premier institutions was significantly helpful in molding them into the solid research institutions they are today. Building the research infrastructure at these institutions was key and will continue to be an important factor in the development of additional research institutions.

Formerly the NIH Office of Research on Minority Health, the NCMHD is now an NIH Center and has a broader mission to intervene wherever health disparities exist. Authority exists to launch interventions such as establishing centers of excellence, research endowments, and loan repayment programs.

The Yale and Howard Scholars Program: Dr. Catherine L. Gilliss, Yale University School of Nursing and Dr. Dorothy L. Powell, Howard University School of Nursing

The Yale-Howard Undergraduate Scholars Program in Nursing Research began during the summer of 2000. Howard is one of the premier historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). In recent years, concern has been expressed about the

dwindling number and the quality of students applying to nursing programs throughout the country.

The purpose of the Yale-Howard summer program is to increase the interest of under-represented minority undergraduate nursing students in careers as nurse scientists and to devise a program to assist these undergraduate students in pursuing research careers in nursing. The objectives of the program are to develop a mutually enriching relationship between the Howard and Yale schools of nursing and to give the chosen scholars an understanding of the role of the advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) in nursing research.

The presenters reviewed the program's selection criteria and structure, including the mentored research experience, the seminars, the elder life program, and the research component. Evaluation indicated that the scholars now understood more about the role of nurse scientists. In a continuation of this program, five senior nursing students from Howard will go to Yale in the summer of 2001. The long-term view is that this program is the beginning of an ongoing working partnership between the Yale and Howard schools of nursing to shape the future of nursing with and for talented nursing students.

Two student-scholars presented short summaries of their work:

- ◆ Nicole Laing: "A Study of the Prevalence of GDM and Smoking among African American Women With Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus"
- ◆ Annette Conley: "Differences in Control of Diabetes Mellitus and Cardiac Risk Factors Among Men and Women"

The presence of these scholars on the Howard campus inspires other students to aspire to nursing research careers and advanced degrees.

The University of Pennsylvania and Hampton University Experience: Dr. Pamela V. Hammond, Hampton University School of Nursing and Dr. Loretta Sweet Jemmott, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

Hampton's resources for this partnership include a reputation for excellence in teaching, a culturally competent faculty, access to community-conscious individuals for service learning activities, access to minority populations, and graduate school resources. The faculty is approximately 50 percent doctorally prepared. Hampton's contributions include participation in research activities, postdoctoral activities, and faculty exchange programs (with the University of Wisconsin, Madison); cosponsorship of workshops and seminars; and promotion of partners' graduate programs.

The goals of the Hampton-University of Pennsylvania initiative were to increase research at Hampton and to increase the minority presence at Pennsylvania. Toward that end, the academic partner's (Pennsylvania's) contributions included research skill development opportunities, manuscript and proposal reviews, and individual and group consultation. Improved quality of teaching occurred at both institutions.

This partnership has accomplished much without a great deal of funding, in part because faculty members volunteered their services. Outcomes include several grants, 34 published articles, and 5 postdoctoral fellowships.

Lessons learned in developing academic partnerships include being careful in selecting partners, valuing the academic partnership, recording the results of partnership negotiations, and maintaining institutional individuality.

The National Cancer Institute Partnership between Majority and Minority Institutions: Dr. Otis Brawley, National Cancer Institute

Dr. Brawley reviewed the history of National Cancer Institute (NCI) funding of 63 comprehensive cancer centers and how diversity issues have been approached. The end result of meetings to address diversity concerns has been a number of cancer centers willing to collaborate with minority medical schools.

Five alliances were formed, and funding was made available for travel expenses and other methods of communication in order to foster these alliances. Initial funding occurred in late 1997, as an administrative supplement to a cooperative agreement award, and some alliances received as much as \$700,000. Money initially emanated from Dr. Ruffin's office and funding for these alliances now comes from the NCI. It is expected that these collaborations will result in investigator-initiated R01 grant requests.

A successful collaboration must have a written plan and it must have buy-in by both institutions, with each institution respecting the other's strengths. An early issue in academic partnerships is the concern that faculty already overburdened with teaching responsibilities would become overwhelmed with the expectation to conduct research; it is critical to discuss and solve this issue as soon as possible. The best alliances occur when the person in charge at each institution can speak with authority about and for his or her institution and when a good personal relationship exists.

The Ethnic Minority Nurse Fellowship Program: Dr. Cornelia P. Porter, American Nurses Association

Dr. Porter provided a history of the Minority Nurse Fellowship (MFP) program, which began in 1974 with a grant award from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). During the 27 years of the MFP's history, this program has been in the forefront of educating nurses; beginning in 1994, emphasis began to be placed on a postdoctoral program. One of the strengths of the MFP Program has been consistency in the directorship, permitting plans to be made and implemented and achievement of the MFP's agenda.

Some of the difficulties in initiating the MFP Program reflected the lack of educational attainment of nurses; few nurses have master's degrees and fewer still have psychiatric degrees. In addition, minority nurses have always been in the minority in the field of psychiatric nursing.

Selected program data were presented. The training status of MFP research trainees (1974-1995) indicates that 147 research fellows were funded by the NIMH; 63 percent earned a Ph.D. degree and 26 percent are enrolled in educational training. Data on postgraduate productivity indicate that, of 91 respondents, 32 percent were awarded research funding. Interestingly, former research fellows contacted indicated that they had not changed their research interests and were still concentrating on mental health issues in minority populations. Results of the data analysis on the MFP program indicate that, when underrepresented minority nurse researchers are recruited, mentored, and provided financial support, they succeed at significant rates.

Dr. Porter discussed the Ethnic Minority Fellowship Program (EMFP), a model partnership between the Federal Government and a national professional organization. The mission of the EMFP is to:

- ◆ Conduct research on psychiatric/mental health and HIV/AIDS issues and other health problems with minority populations across the lifespan,
- ◆ Take leadership roles in the initiation of scientific investigations about minorities,
- ◆ Expand the psychiatric/mental health and HIV/AIDS literature about minorities over the lifespan, and
- ◆ Assist nurse researchers in functioning as integrated members of interdisciplinary research teams.

Dr. Porter emphasized the importance of a “critical mass” of minority students. A group of minority students can help faculty learn about minority issues in depth, teach faculty about how to support minority students and each other.

Workshop participant comments included the need to create a campaign that includes partnering as well as working with the upcoming pipeline of nursing students; it was noted that, particularly in mental health, the number of students in the pipeline is decreasing.

Overview of the Application Process: Dr. Carole Hudgings, NINR

Dr. Hudgings reviewed the application process for pilot projects that will result from this workshop. This is a pilot process; larger initiatives will be open to the entire scientific community at a later date. The goal of these 1-year administrative supplements is to build research capacity, and NINR expects to receive seven applications as an outgrowth of this workshop.

The scope of the administrative supplements for pilot projects encompasses four broad areas: health disparity and disease prevention research, research training, health disparity research education, and research outreach. In Phase 1, applications will be accepted from the seven institutions represented at this meeting; funding will be \$50,000 for each award. Phase 2 will involve the NINR’s receipt of a progress report from each collaboration, and then an additional \$100,000 per pilot project may be awarded based upon that progress report. Phase 3 is envisioned to be an open competition available to the entire scientific community.

After providing basic instructions on how to complete the application, Dr. Hudgings noted that a key feature of these supplements is that proposed work must be consistent and congruent with the scientific inquiry of the parent grant; a conceptual link must be drawn between the pilot project proposal and the parent grant. Indirect costs are limited to 8 percent. Because this is a pilot project, Dr. Hudgings requested that applicants provide feedback on suggested process improvements.

Participants Explore Potential Arrangements

Representatives of each institution and organization made short presentations about their mission, research interests, and activities, offering potential partners initial insight into the strengths each has to offer to a collaboration.

Partnered Groups Discuss Arrangements

Participants broke into groups and discussed partnerships, to be reported on Day Two of this meeting.

Day Two, February 6, 2001

Welcome and Summary of Day One

Ms. Kay Johnson Graham

Ms. Graham welcomed participants to the second day of the meeting and presented a summary of Day One. She noted that establishment of partner working groups had begun and would be continued today, with time for working groups and partners to recap yesterday's discussions and to develop joint presentations.

The participants continued yesterday's discussion of their plans for collaboration. Each partnership presented a first draft of its proposal to the full group.

Partner Team Reports were made by:

- University of Iowa and Alcorn State University
- Yale University and Howard University Partnership
- University of Pennsylvania-Hampton University- National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurses Associations
- University of Texas at Austin, New Mexico State University, and University of New Mexico
- University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and University of Texas at San Antonio
- University of California at San Francisco and University of Puerto Rico

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University

Working Lunch: Dr. Patricia A. Grady

Dr. Grady responded to the team reports and urged that each team continue its dialogue during lunch in order to finish the initial planning and to plan the next steps. Although Dr. Ruffin was not able to attend today, Dr. Grady reported that he is waiting to hear the results. Dr. Grady emphasized that, although specific financial support cannot be guaranteed, both the NINR and the new NCMHD are committed to supporting the themes set forth in this conference.

Dr. Grady highlighted some shared themes from the teams' presentations:

- ◆ Students and participants should be linked to ongoing education programs so that activities are goal-directed.
- ◆ Followup should be involved at all levels of the proposed activities. This is not a single effort, but is about creating a path for people to grow.
- ◆ Pilot projects are likely to lead to larger research efforts.
- ◆ Visiting professorships can assist in increasing the ability to carry out nursing research and training people to conduct nursing research. They may also help nurse researchers establish a long-term career trajectory.
- ◆ Faculty development is critical as a way to strengthen faculty and increase student interest in nursing education.
- ◆ The potential for international collaborations may be explored.

Dr. Grady commended all the participants and stated that the NINR will send out additional information requested to stimulate the partnerships in additional directions. She reminded participants that the meeting notebooks contain resources and information about program announcements, Web sites of other NIH institutes, and lists of available minority programs. Dr. Grady talked with participants informally and answered questions during lunch.

Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned officially at 1:20 p.m.